

REMARKS

Summary of the Response to Office Action

This Amendment responds to the Office Action mailed on December 27, 2006. Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. The pending claims are respectfully submitted for reconsideration by the Examiner.

Rejections to the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-17 stand rejected under U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,902,433 to Hashimoto et al. (“Hashimoto”). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Hashimoto discloses a connector receptacle including a mating portion to which a connector plug is mated with, a plurality of contacts individually connected to the connector plug mate, and a physical layer basic circuit performing predetermined operations so that a data signal is communicated in series with the contacts through the connector plug and the data signal is communicated in parallel with a link layer circuit. (Hashimoto, 1:50-57).

Claim 1

The rejection of claim 1 states that Hashimoto teaches the invention. The rejection states that input-output interface circuit 5e and the combination of the output circuit 5b and clock 8 are respectively the “I/O unit” and “communication unit” recited by claim 1. (Office Action, p. 2). Further, the rejection states that physical layer control circuit 5a corresponds to the recited “control unit”. *Id.* Moreover, the rejection states that “one of ordinary skill in the art... would have known a common bus inherently must be included in order to serially communicate the data signal.” *Id.*

The alleged “common bus” is not inherent to Hashimoto.

Inherency may not be established by probabilities or possibilities. See MPEP 2112 IV. The rejection of claim 1 fails to provide a basis in fact and/or technical reasoning to support a determination that the allegedly inherent characteristic (i.e. “common bus”) necessarily flows from the applied prior art. *Id.* The fact that a certain result or characteristic may occur or be present in the prior art is not sufficient to establish the inherency of that result or

characteristic. *Id.* Thus, the rejection of claim 1 is improper because it presumes that a “common bus” is an inherent characteristic of Hashimoto. There is no support for such a presumption because a “common bus” as articulated in the rejection is neither expressly disclosed in Hashimoto nor the natural result flowing from Hashimoto’s explicitly explicated limitations. Thus, Hashimoto fails to disclose a “common bus” as recited by claim 1, and there is insufficient basis from which to conclude that the missing descriptive matter (i.e., the “common bus” recited by claim 1) is inherently present in Hashimoto. *Id.*

Hashimoto explicitly fails to disclose the recited “communication unit”.

Claim 1 recites an electronic connector that comprises, in part, a “control unit” that generates “a control signal for driving of a load...according to the signal received from the I/O unit.” Additionally, claim 1 recites “a communication unit, having a function of decoding the control signal, and transmitting the control signal to an equipment connected to the corresponding load through the common bus.” The rejection states that physical layer control circuit 5a is the “control unit”, input-output interface circuit 5e is the “I/O unit”, and output circuit 5b and clock 8 are the “communication unit”.

Hashimoto discloses that the combination of the output circuit 5b and clock 8 (i.e., the alleged communication unit) regenerates the data signal according to the signal from the connector plug X and transmits the data signal to input-output interface circuit 5e (i.e., the alleged I/O unit). (Hashimoto, FIG. 6; 5:1-25). Accordingly, the alleged “communication unit”(i.e., 5b and 8) decodes a data signal from the plug connector X, instead of from the alleged “I/O unit” (i.e., 5e). Thus, as articulated in the rejection Hashimoto fails to disclose a “communication unit” as set forth in claim 1.

Moreover, reading Hashimoto as articulated in the rejection requires that the alleged “communication unit” transmit the alleged “control signal” signal to “to an equipment connected to the corresponding load through the common bus.” Instead, Hashimoto discloses that the alleged “communication unit”(i.e., 5b and 8) transmits the data signal to the alleged “I/O unit.” Thus, for this additional reason Hashimoto does not disclose a “communication unit” as set forth in claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Hashimoto does not disclose a “common bus” or “communication unit” as set forth in claim 1, and thus cannot anticipate claim 1. *See MPEP 2131.01*

Claims 2-4

Claims 2-4, which depend from claim 1, are patentable over Hashimoto for the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for the features recited by each dependent claim.

Claim 5

Claim 5 was rejected on the same basis as claim 1. (Office Action, P. 3).

Claim 5 recites, in part, an electronic connector “connected to a load, and communicating a signal through a common bus, comprising: a communication unit, receiving a control signal for controlling the driving of the load through the common bus”. Claim 5 further recites that the electronic connector comprises a “load driving unit”.

As described above, Hashimoto fails to disclose a “common bus.” Further, the rejection of claim 5 is facially incomplete because it does not articulate a basis for how Hashimoto discloses a “load driving unit” as set forth in claim 5. For each of these reasons, Hashimoto cannot anticipate claim 5.

Claims 6-11

Claims 6-11, which depend from claim 5, are patentable over Hashimoto for the same reasons as claim 5, as well as for the features recited by each dependent claim.

Claim 12

Independent claim 12 is directed toward an auxiliary equipment module having, “a communication unit, receiving a control signal for controlling the driving of the load through the common bus.” Hashimoto does not disclose an auxiliary equipment module. As discussed in connection with claim 1, Hashimoto also fails to disclose a “communication unit” or “common bus” as recited by claim 12, and thus cannot anticipate claim 12.

Claims 13-17

Claims 13-17, which depend from claim 12, are patentable over Hashimoto for the same reasons as claim 12, as well as for the features recited by each dependent claim.

CONCLUSION

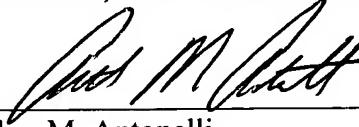
In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all rejections have been overcome and should be withdrawn. Thus all current claims are submitted to be in condition for allowance, early notice of which would be appreciated. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP

By:



Arthur M. Antonelli
Reg. No. 51,410

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Customer No.: 009629

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
Telephone: 202-739-3000
Facsimile: 202-739-3001